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PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION:

Trump picks Perry for energy secretary

POLITICO

December 13, 2016

On a presidential debate stage five years ago, Rick Perry blanked on the Energy Department's name when trying to include it in a list of agencies he promised to abolish — memorably concluding with "oops."

Now Donald Trump has chosen the former Texas governor to lead the sprawling department, which oversees the security of the nation's nuclear weapons and has

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ECA Annual Meeting
Washington, DC

played major roles in President Barack Obama's climate agenda and nuclear deal with Iran. Three sources close to the transition confirmed the choice Tuesday.

Conservatives had favored the former Texas governor for the job, viewing him as someone with management experience who would be willing to question the agency's status quo. They believe Perry might bring serious reform to the agency because he isn't wedded to energy programs, such as DOE's fossil and efficiency offices, that conservatives have criticized as unnecessary, market-distorting schemes. [>>Continue reading](#)

Trump Team Memo Hints at Big Shake-Up of U.S. Energy Policy

Bloomberg

December 8, 2016

Advisers to President-elect Donald Trump are developing plans to reshape Energy Department programs, help keep aging nuclear plants online and identify staff who played a role in promoting President Barack Obama's climate agenda.

The transition team has asked the agency to list employees and contractors who attended United Nations climate meetings, along with those who helped develop the Obama administration's social cost of carbon metrics, used to estimate and justify the climate benefits of new rules. The advisers are also seeking information on agency loan programs, research activities and the basis for its statistics, according to a five-page internal document circulated by the Energy Department on Wednesday. The document lays out 65 questions from the Trump transition team, sources within the agency said.

On the campaign trail, Trump promised to eliminate government waste, rescind "job-killing" regulations and cancel the Paris climate accord in which nearly 200 countries pledged to slash greenhouse gas emissions. Trump, though, hasn't detailed specific plans for federal agencies. The document obtained by Bloomberg offers clues on where his administration may be headed on energy policy, based on the nature of questions involving the agency's research agenda, nuclear program and national labs. [>>Continue reading](#)

"Meeting the New Administration: Addressing Community Priorities and Securing Progress"

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INTERNATIONAL:

Russia and America Need Nuclear Cooperation, No Matter What

The National Interest

December 12, 2016

Nuclear is different. Nuclear energy can electrify the world or destroy it. Cooperation is essential to maximize its benefits and to limit its dangers. President-elect Trump should move swiftly to reestablish U.S.-Russian nuclear cooperation, which has been held hostage to political differences.

Whereas political relations between the United States and Russia have swung from confrontation during the Cold War, to cooperation in its aftermath, and now back to confrontation, combating nuclear risks has required dialogue and at least some modicum of cooperation. In spite of bitter ideological differences during the Cold War, U.S. and Russian leaders took cooperative measures to avoid nuclear confrontation, reduce nuclear stockpiles and limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The collapse of the Soviet Union transformed the global nuclear threat—from potential annihilation of humankind by the enormous nuclear arsenal in the hands of the Soviet government, to the possibility that the new Russian government may lose control of its tens of thousands of nuclear weapons, over one million kilograms of fissile materials, a huge nuclear infrastructure, and the several hundred thousand nuclear experts and workers it had inherited from the Soviet Union. [>>Continue reading](#)

TREATMENT & TRANSPORTATION:

Richland nuclear plant barred from shipping waste after incident

Tri-City Herald

December 12, 2016

Energy Northwest is temporarily barred from sending waste to a commercial disposal site at Hanford after a shipment in November had more radioactivity than reported.

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The cask of low-level radioactive waste was rejected at the US Ecology disposal site on Hanford land Nov. 9.

Workers at the disposal site surveyed the package for radiation and measured it as seven times higher than the shipping manifest for the package declared, according to Energy Northwest. [>>Continue reading](#)

LANL months away from renewing nuclear waste shipments

Albuquerque Journal

December 12, 2016

When a southeast New Mexico nuclear waste repository reopens in the coming weeks following a nearly three-year hiatus, the drums of nuclear waste at Los Alamos won't be in line for shipment.

That's because the Los Alamos National Laboratory is still recovering from its own problems that led to the accident that shut down the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in 2014 – when LANL drum No. 68660 overheated and burst underground at WIPP, releasing radiation into the salt mine repository and in small amounts into the atmosphere.

Since then, some 60 other drums also containing a potentially combustible mix of an organic cat litter absorbent and nitrate salts have been under 24-hour surveillance at LANL. [>>Continue reading](#)

NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING:

Michigan, Illinois take different paths on struggling nuclear plants

Midwest Energy News

December 12, 2016

Less than 24 hours after Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner signed off on a plan to subsidize two nuclear plants for billions of dollars over the next 10 years, energy companies in Michigan announced plans to close one of the state's three plants as a way to protect ratepayers.

Entergy's decision to close the Palisades plant in 2018 — by cutting short a power-purchase agreement with Consumers Energy that was to expire in 2022 — is a strong contrast to the protracted debate in Illinois over whether to subsidize unprofitable nuclear plants there.

Unlike in Illinois, Entergy and Consumers officials have no plans to push for such a ratepayer subsidy in Michigan. They say closing Palisades, which has faced multiple safety violations over the past several years, is the more financially prudent option. [>>Continue reading](#)

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